

COMPUTERWORLD

NEWS

APRIL 16, 1984

Security panel recommended

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A Congressional subcommittee has wrapped up hearings on computer and communications security and privacy by recommending the establishment of a national commission to investigate a range of computer-related problems.

The recommendation was one of several presented at a press conference last Wednesday by Rep. Dan Glickman (D-Kan.), chairman of the House Science and Technology Subcommittee on Transportation, Aviation and Materials, and Rep. Bill Carney (R-N.Y.), ranking subcommittee minority member.

The two congressmen, whose subcommittee has conducted a year-long investigation into computer security problems in the government and the private sector, released a report prepared by the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. The report maintains that insufficient attention is paid by the federal government to the growing problems of computer crime, privacy and unauthorized access of data bases.

Commenting on the findings of the subcommittee, Glickman accused the government of paying "good lip service" to these issues without taking proper action to prevent what he called "catastrophes in this country waiting to happen both in and out of government."

— Besides calling for a national commission, he listed several other steps to correct this situation:

■ The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) should "provide a focus" for computer and telecommunications security and privacy activities within government, including the preparation of a manual to give agencies guidance in planning and implementing security measures.

■ "An intensive [security] training effort is needed in this country for both computer users and security personnel.... The federal government ought to be involved in that, the National Science Foundation [and] universities."

■ OMB should establish security data classification to protect sensitive computer data.

■ The National Bureau of Standards should be given the resources to certify security methods and systems for government and private computer users.

Glickman said that if the administration does not adopt the national commission plan he will push the idea legislatively.

page 12